AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A method for detecting a predisposition to liver disease in an individual human, the method comprising:

analyzing an individual for ~~quantitative or qualitative~~ a change in ~~phenotype or~~ genotype of keratin wherein said alteration is selected from ~~K8 or K18~~ K18 Δ64-71; K18 T102A; K18 H127L; K18 I149V; K18 R260Q; K18 E275G; K18 Q284R; K18 T294M; K18 T296I; K18 G339R; K8 G52V; K8 Y53H; K8 G61C; K8 R340H; K8 G433S; K8 R453C; and K8 1-465(I)RDT(468),

wherein the change is associated with a predisposition to noncryptogenic liver disease.

2. (canceled)

3. (currently amended) ~~The method of Claim 2,~~ A method for detecting a predisposition to noncryptogenic liver disease in an individual human, the method comprising:

analyzing an individual for change in genotype of keratin K8 at position 340 ~~wherein said human keratin is one or more of K8 G52X; K8 Y53X; K8 G61X; K8 R340X; K8 G433X; K8 R453X; K18 T102X; K18 H127X; K18 I149X; K18 R260X; K18 E275X; K18 Q284X; K18 T294X; K18 T296X; and K18 G339X, where X is any amino acid other than the naturally occurring amino acid or a deleted amino acid~~.

wherein a mutation at position 340 of keratin K8 from CGT→CAT is associated with a predisposition to noncryptogenic liver disease.

4. (canceled)

5. (withdrawn) The method of Claim 2, wherein said human keratin is one or more of K18 Δ64-71; K18 T102A; K18 H127L; K18 I149V; K18 R260Q; K18 E275G; K18 Q284R; K18 T294M; K18 T296I; K18 G339R.

6. (currently amended) The method of Claim 3, wherein said analyzing the genomic or mRNA sequences comprises the steps of:

amplifying a region of the K8 ~~or K18~~ coding ~~or noncoding~~ sequences from isolated genomic DNA or mRNA to provide an amplified fragment;

detecting the presence of a mutated sequence in said amplified fragment.

7. (original) The method of Claim 6, wherein said detecting step comprises hybridization with a probe specific for said mutated sequence or digestion with specific restriction enzymes.

8. (withdrawn) The method of Claim 3, wherein said detecting step comprising contacting a cell, tissue or potentially a serum sample with an antibody specific for one or more of said polymorphisms.

9-14. (canceled)